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FM AMEMBASSY HANOI

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3256

INFO RUEHHM/AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY 1730

RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 5077

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 6759

RUEHGZ/AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU 0715

RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5564

RUEHPF/AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH 3587

RUEHVN/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 3839

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HANOI 002240

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MLS; INL/AAE; G/TIP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: KWMN KOCI PHUM KCRM CH VM

SUBJECT: RECENT VIETNAM-CHINA ANTI-TRAFFICKING COOPERATION

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Vietnam's border region with China accounts for the majority of its trafficking in persons cases. To tackle this problem, both countries are bolstering their law enforcement cooperation, including through bilateral agreements and operational cooperation. Their efforts have yielded results, including rescuing victims and rolling up gangs involved in trafficking. Furthermore, both countries are working to raise public awareness about the problem of trafficking in persons - and their cooperative activities to combat it -- through the co-hosting of an international anti-trafficking forum and a border area public awareness campaign. End Summary.

A LONG AND DIFFICULT BORDER

¶2. (SBU) The problem of trafficking in persons (TIP) along the 1,463-kilometer border between Vietnam and China is endemic. Earlier this month, Vice Minister of Public Security Le The Tiem said in an article in the "People's Police" newspaper that the hotspot border provinces in northern Vietnam include Quang Ninh, Lang Son, Cao Bang, Lai Chau and Lao Cai. During a conference on human trafficking sponsored by the GVN earlier this year, the Ministry of Public Security (MPS) reported that they had identified 23 TIP routes and 105 hotspots in Vietnam, with the Vietnam-China border being the "worst TIP region." According to a recent MPS survey, trafficking cases in the Vietnam-China border region account for 70 percent of the country's trafficking total. According to a recent report issued by the Vietnamese police, more than 550 Vietnamese women and children were trafficked to China in the last two years. Out of that number, about 185 were from Quang Ninh, 137 from Lang Son, 90 from Lao Cai, and the rest from Cao Bang, Ha Giang, Lai Chau and Dien Bien provinces.

BILATERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT COOPERATION

¶3. (SBU) On June 1, public security officials from Vietnam and China signed a Memorandum of Understanding to combat trafficking in persons across the two countries' border. According to an MPS press release, this MOU serves as the basis for the two countries' law enforcement personnel and anti-TIP task forces to combat trafficking, rescue victims and receive returnees. Law enforcement efforts have recently yielded some notable successes. In a joint effort between the two countries' police forces, four Chinese children trafficked to Vietnam were returned to their homes in Guangzhou. The children, three boys and a girl between nine and 14 years' old, were kidnapped in Zhejiang Province, China, on May 5, in an attempt to traffic them to a third country, according to Vietnam

News. Police reported that they rescued these children in Ho Chi Minh City. Furthermore, in July and August, Vietnamese and Chinese police rolled up more than 30 gangs involved in trafficking in persons.

RAISING AWARENESS

¶4. (SBU) In a bid to raise the profile of bilateral anti-trafficking cooperation, on August 28, 2006, Vietnam and China co-hosted in Hanoi the first-ever Children's Forum on Anti-Trafficking in Women and Children Across Borders. The initiative was jointly sponsored by the Vietnam Women's Union and All-China Women's Federation, with support from UNICEF. Over 120 children between the ages of 11 and 18 from the border provinces of Lang Son, Lao Cai, Lai Chau and Hung Yen of Vietnam, and Guangxi and Yunnan of China, participated, together with government officials from both countries and representatives from Vietnamese and Chinese mass organizations, UNICEF country offices in Vietnam and China and international organizations in Vietnam.

¶5. (SBU) During this forum, Vietnamese and Chinese children shared views and concerns about the cross-border trafficking situation. Messages from the children were presented to Vietnamese and Chinese officials in the hope of developing new national strategies and further strengthening cross-border cooperation. Prior to the forum, the children also participated in a two-day workshop, where they shared their experiences and discussed the negative impact that trafficking had on their lives. Speaking at the forum, Vice Chairwoman of the Vietnam Women's Union Nguyen Thi Oanh said that "trafficking in women and children flagrantly violates their rights and we must respect children's views. Children also need to actively

HANOI 00002240 002 OF 002

participate in the prevention of trafficking and combating against these unacceptable crimes."

¶6. (SBU) Separately, Vietnamese and Chinese authorities launched earlier this year a large-scale campaign in their respective border provinces to raise public awareness about the problem of cross-border trafficking in persons. According to a Vietnam Women's Union official, the program has enhanced significantly the local people's knowledge about the crime. In this official's overall estimation, "Vietnam and China are working well with each other to resolve the trafficking issue."

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